

GMEC-AHEC

Southwest Virginia Graduate Medical Education Consortium &
Area Health Education Center

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

May 27, 2011

RE: In the Matter of applications of AT&T Inc. and Deutsche Telekom AG for consent to assign or Transfer Control of licenses and Authorizations (WT Docket No. 11-65).

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

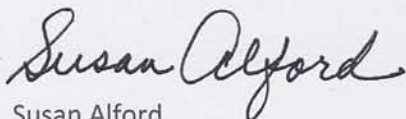
Located in Lebanon, Virginia, the Southwest Virginia AHEC (SWAHEC) reaches some of the least accessible areas in Appalachia. Our mission is to provide education, information, training and services to improve health outcomes in Southwest Virginia. SWAHEC primarily focuses on rural health care workforce development to meet the needs of communities and health care professionals.

In the last several years in particular, we have come to rely even more on technology to meet our mission. In our very rural area, conditions are improving, but they are not where they should be. To be effective, we need faster, reliable, and more widely available broadband connections. That is why I think the merger of AT&T and T-Mobile USA is so important.

Based on what I have read about this plan, I think that the 4G mobile broadband the merger will bring will help us strengthen our health career programs. Better broadband technology will also help our region's health care practitioners collaborate not only with each other, but with their colleagues anywhere in the world. Finally, we will have access to the kind of technology that will enable us to achieve our goal of improved health and disease prevention for the citizens of the Commonwealth.

I hope you will take into consideration the technology and wireless broadband needs of our rural-serving organization as you evaluate and approve the proposed merger.

Sincerely,



Susan Alford
Director, Southwest Virginia AHEC

CC:

Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker

Commissioner Mignon Clyburn

Commissioner Michael Copps

Commissioner Robert McDowell